

Serial No. 10/618,654

H-720-03

REMARKS

The Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection.

Claims 25-39 are now pending.

The Applicants have noted the requirement to furnish formal drawings in response to the Office Action. However, formal drawings were submitted with this continuation application on July 15, 2003. The record does not show any objection to these drawings, which are believed to satisfy all formalities. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the requirement to furnish the formal drawings.

Claims 23 and 40-51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Snavelly et al., U.S. 6,772,167 (Snavelly), and Weissman et al., U.S. 6,212,524 (Weissman). Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Snavelly and Weissman, and further in view of Styczinski, U.S. 5,708,668 (Styczinski). Noting that Snavelly is not prior art to the present application under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) (Snavelly has a U.S. filing date of September 7, 2000, whereas the present application enjoys an effective U.S. filing data of January 25, 1999, under 35 U.S.C. §120), such that the rejections of Claims 23-24, and 40-51 should be withdrawn, the Applicants have opted to expedite allowance of the application by canceling the rejected claims and rewriting

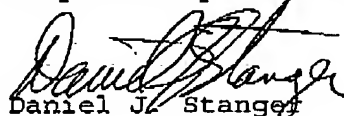
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Claims 25 and 36 in independent form. The Applicants note further that Weissman does not appear to be prior art to the present application when the foreign priority claim of U.S.C. §119 is considered.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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